

Hamilton Field, Frame Building Type F  
(Facility Nos. 628, 629, 630, 691, 694)  
B Street  
Novato  
Marin County  
California

HABS No. CA-2398-CT

HABS  
CAL  
21-NOVA,  
ICT-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD  
Frame Building Type F  
(Facility Nos. 628, 629, 630, 691, 694)

HABS  
CAL  
21-NOVA,  
ICT-

HABS No. CA-2398-CT

**Location:** Hamilton Army Air Field  
Novato, Marin County, California  
Frame Building Type F  
Air Group Headquarters (Facility No. 628 [southeast side of B Street/A Street junction], Recreation/Library (#629 [east side of B Street between A Street and Main Entrance Drive]), Air Group Headquarters (#630 [northeast corner of B Street and Main Entrance Drive junction]), Division Headquarters (#691 [southwest side of B Street/A Street junction]), Base Personnel Office (#694 [northwest corner of B Street/Main Entrance Drive intersection])

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)  
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)  
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;  
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

**Significance:**

Buildings 628, 629, 630, 691, and 694 are considered significant for their association with Air Force history in northern California, and with World War II actions in the Pacific Theater. These long one-story frame buildings were constructed in the World War II expansion areas of the base to serve as air group headquarters and educational facilities.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

**Description:**

Those five one-story frame buildings are rectilinear in shape and measure approximately 30 by 150 feet. They have low-pitched composition shingle gable roofs with louvered vents in the gable ends and overhanging eaves. Metal ventilators are located on the ridgelines. Siding is horizontal wood board, covered with asbestos shingles. The foundations are concrete or post on concrete pier, those built on slopes have partial wood understories of wood posts or trellis panels. The primary entrances, on each end of the buildings, are accessed via a concrete stoop and stairway with two-inch-diameter metal pipe railings or two-inch by four-inch wood rails. Double entrance doors, one each end of the buildings, are solid-core wood with four lights and three recessed panels; lock sets are standard metal with exterior Von Duprien thumbblatch locks, with interior round knobs and half-mortised hinges.

**HAMILTON FIELD**  
**Frame Building Type F**  
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**HABS No. CA-2398-CT Page 2**

Doors have metal panic bars on the interior. Windows are eight- over eight-light double hung wood sash.

Originally the interior floor spaces of each building consisted of a large open room with smaller administrative rooms. Some of the interior spaces have now been partitioned for use as offices. Ceilings originally were open to the peak with exposed six-inch-square roof trusses supported by braces. These were later covered with gypsum board or suspended acoustical tile. Original interior walls were covered with gypsum board; composition wood paneling has been installed over the original in some hallways and rooms, and acoustical tile over some ceilings. Subflooring for the barracks is tongue and groove wood with eight-inch-square vinyl asphalt tile covering. Doors are solid-core wood with either three or five recessed panels. Heating systems consist of forced air gas heaters; all ductwork is exposed. Original lighting fixtures are of the "schoolhouse" type, with a canopy and suspended milk glass bowl shade. Replacement lights are industrial type open end double tube fluorescent fixtures mounted flush with the ceiling or suspended on rods and chains.

Latrines are located in each building. They have ceramic tile floors, with one- by one inch, one- by two-inch, and two by two-inch tiles. Walls are clad in four- by four-inch ceramic tile. A changing room with wood benches adjoins the shower area. Sinks are enameled cast iron and are wall-mounted. Made by Standard, each has a mirror. There are four to six sinks in each building. Three "Standard" wall-mounted urinals and three to four Standard Sanitary Corp. Pacific toilets separated by wood stall partitions are located in each latrine. There are also floor-mounted cast iron mop sinks in each latrine. Lighting fixtures are recessed chrome and glass.

The barracks buildings were modernized in 1954 with the installation of bedroom partitions, a mahogany chair rail, asphalt tile base and flooring, tileboard weinscoting, and exterior asbestos shingle siding.

These buildings are located in a flat site at the base of a hill. Concrete walkways surround the buildings and provided access to those living in surrounding barracks. Small additions added to 628, 629 and 694 housed mechanical equipment (boiler, compressor) and do not detract from the original mass and character of the buildings.

#### **Historical Context:**

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

These five buildings were completed in August 1942 during the peak of World War II preparation. Construction costs ranged from a low of \$18,339.93 (Facility 630) to a high of

**HAMILTON FIELD**  
**Frame Building Type F**  
**(Facility Nos. 628, 629, 630, 691, 694)**

**HABS No. CA-2398-CT Page 3**

\$21,885.61 (Facility 694). Facility 628 originally served as an airmen's barracks; it was converted to a squadron headquarters and Red Cross office in 1969. Facility 629 was the base library, a function it retained until base closure in 1974. Facility 630, originally administrative offices, was an education center and headquarters for Group Air Base in 1969. Facility 691 was a Squadron Headquarters in 1942 and remained in use as a headquarters for the Numbered Air Force until base closure. Facility 694, also administrative offices, was a family service center in 1968, assisting military families to relocate or adjust to living at Hamilton. Today all the buildings are vacant and in dilapidated condition.

**Sources:**

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

See the following project Field Record work:

Facility No. 628, Air Group Headquarters: roll 31, exposures 1-6; roll 65, exposures 3-4, 11-12

Facility No. 629, Recreation/Library: roll 30, exposure 10-12; roll 31, exposures 7-12; roll 32, exposures 1-3; roll 65, exposures 9-10; roll 70, exposures 1-8

Facility No. 630, Air Group Headquarters: roll 32, exposures 7-9; roll 62, exposures 5-6

Facility No. 691, Division Headquarters: roll 55, exposures 5-6; roll 62, exposures 11-12; roll 71, exposures 11-12; roll 73, exposures 3-6

Facility No. 694, Base Personnel Office: roll 60, exposures 9-10; roll 62, exposures 7-8; roll 65, exposure 5-6; roll 70, exposures 11-12

The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

**Project Information:**

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP

**HAMILTON FIELD**  
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**HABS No. CA-2398-CT Page 4**

and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part B00, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

Text prepared by: Mary L. Maniery/Judith Marvin

Title: Historian/Architectural Historian

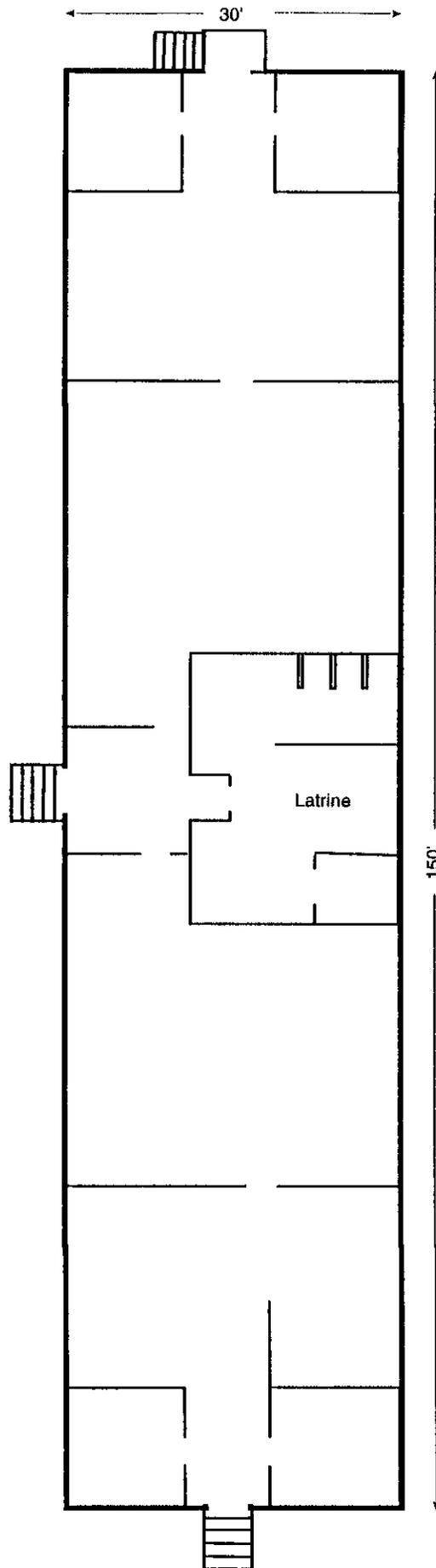
Affiliation: PAR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC., Sacramento, California

Date prepared: July 1995

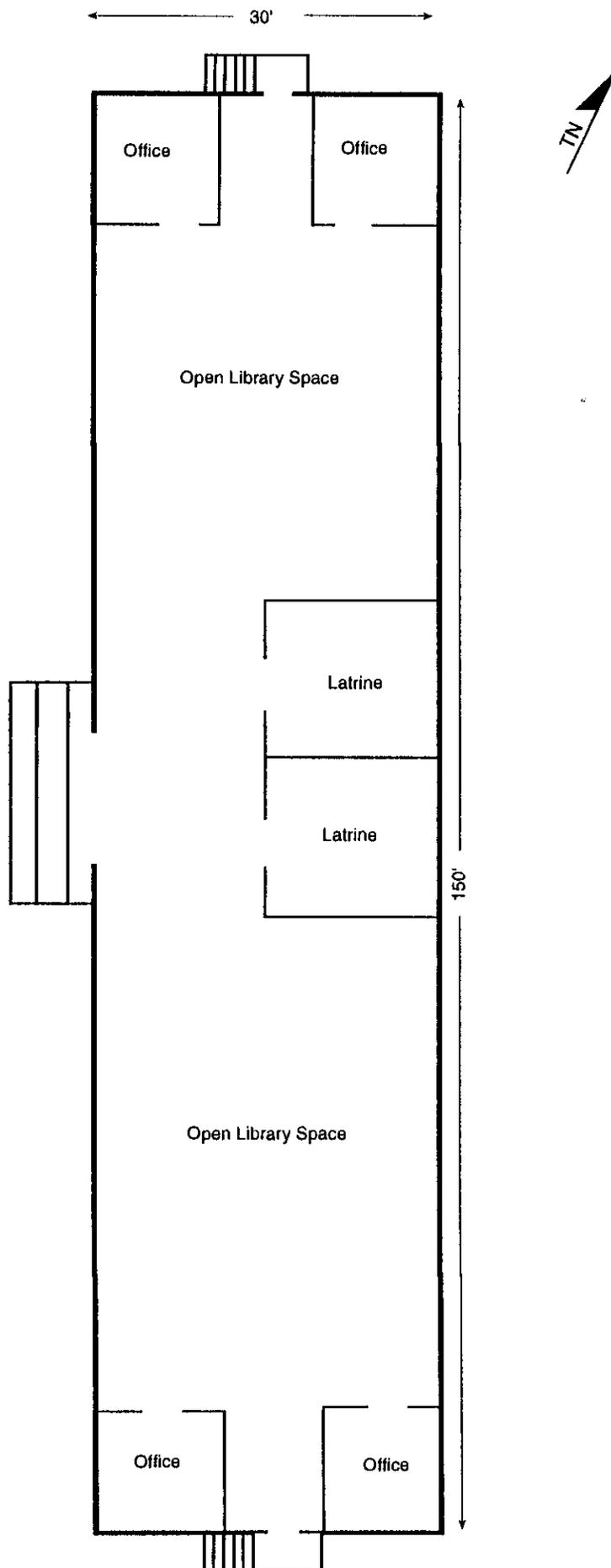
Photography prepared by: David De Vries

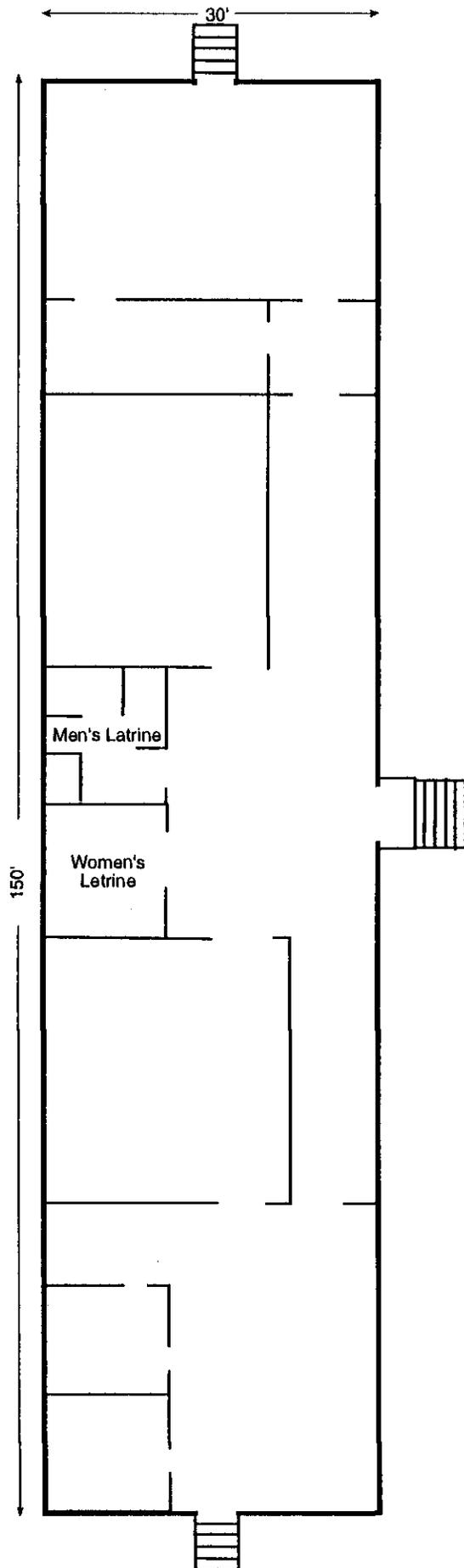
Affiliation: Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California

Date of photographs: June 1993

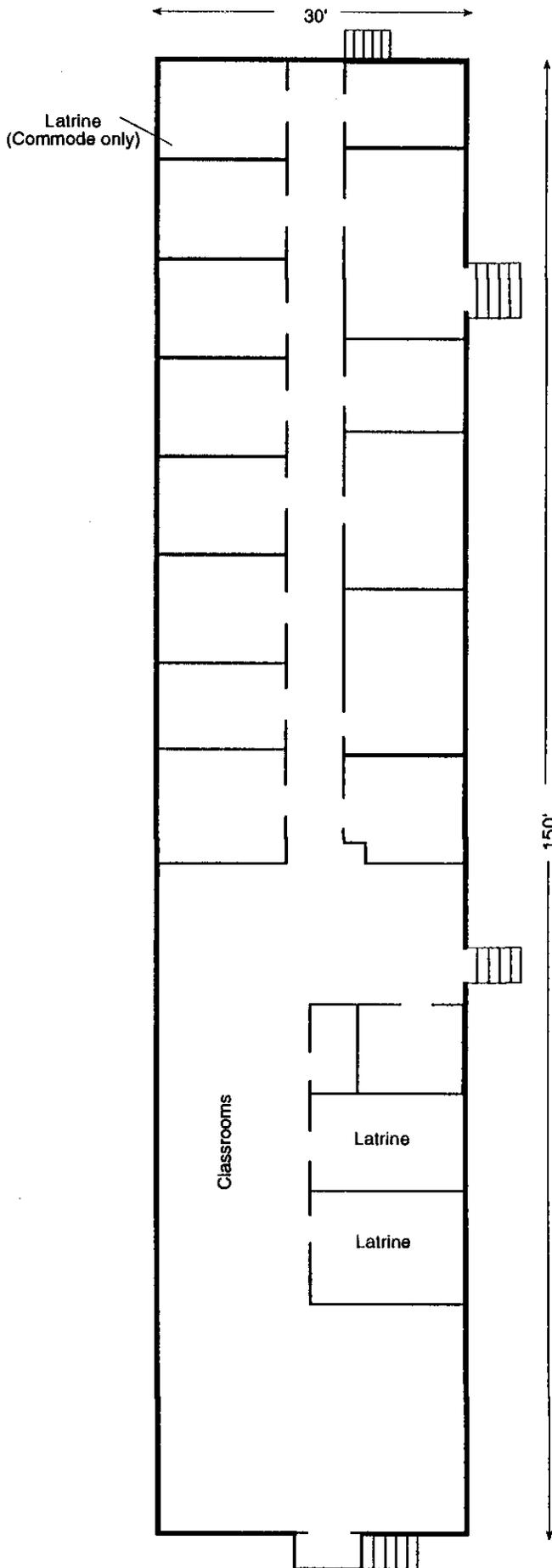


NOTE: Unlebeled rooms used as office spece





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